

THE AWAG VANK' ARMENIAN GOSPELS, A.D. 1200

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Source: *The British Library Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (AUTUMN 1977), pp. 139-166

Published by: [British Library](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42554049>

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THE AWAG VANK' ARMENIAN GOSPELS, A.D. 1200

C. J. F. DOWSETT

IN 1975 the British Library acquired the Awag Vank' Armenian Gospels formerly belonging to the Collection of the late Mr. Hagop Kevorkian of New York,¹ a work of both artistic and historical interest.

This illuminated manuscript, now Or. 13654, comprises the Four Gospels in Classical Armenian, with the Letter of Eusebius to Carpianus, and some of the Eusebian Concordance Tables (nos. 10, 5, 6-7, the rest, nos. 1-4, 8-9, being now missing). There are no kephalaia, etc. The manuscript consists of 384 vellum folios, 373 mm by 288 mm, with four paper fly-leaves. The folios were restitched and regathered at the time of a rebinding, probably as part of the restoration work in A.D. 1625/6 commissioned by Tēr Yacob, mentioned below, and carried out twenty years after the manuscript had arrived in Constantinople in 1605 from the region of Kemakh in Anatolia, where it was originally copied in A.D. 1200. The alphabetic numbers now at the end and/or beginning of the fascicles are consistent with the style of the same scribe Yakob. The fascicles regularly comprise eight folios. The first fascicle, unnumbered, comprises six folios, consistent with the loss of some of the Eusebian Canon Tables. The second fascicle, now numbered as A (1), begins with the title-page of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and has eight folios. The fascicle numbered 19 has seven folios; that numbered 20 has nine, and one folio has clearly been excised after the regathering, and that unfortunately from the part of the text containing the main colophon; and the final fascicle has only three folios. The Concordance numbers, original, are in the lower margins, in black ink. The text is arranged on the page in double column, with seventeen lines per column, written in large, thick, upright uncials (*erkat'agir*). The quality of the ink used varied. The tannic acid of this 'iron script' has eaten through the thin vellum of fol. 383, rendering some of the text illegible. Part of the date formula on fol. 383a (Յամի Ո որդի յիսներորդի) has been re-inked which, together with the fact that one of the pages of the colophon has been excised, provokes some suspicion of fraud; but there is no evidence of the substitution of one letter/numeral for another, and the date may be deemed genuine. On other pages the ink has faded to invisibility, and an interlinear transcription in a florid notary script (*nōtragir*) – the transcription is in the left margin on fol. 31b – was made in 1075 Arm. (inc. 16.10.1625), as an eight-line stanza of octosyllabic verse in monorhyme records on fol. 181b (fig. 1).

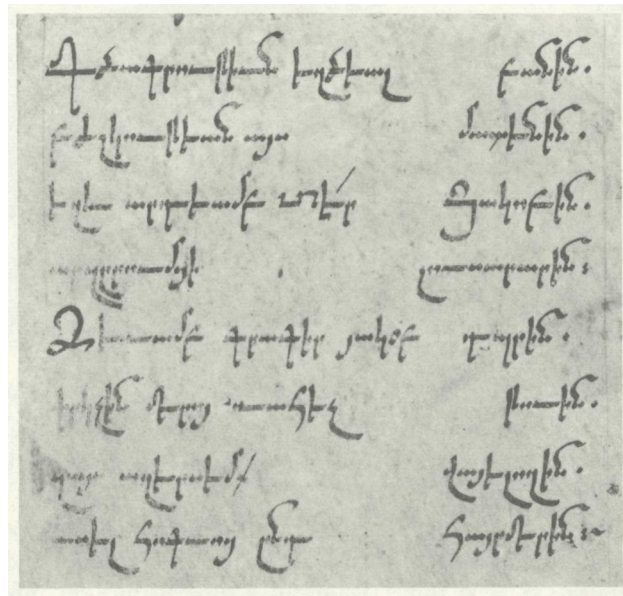


Fig. 1

*Gcagrut' iwn xlceal banin.
 bžškut' ean ays matenin.
 elew ardeamb Ter Yakobin.
 arzrumc' i lusararin.
 jeramb gragir yakōb dprin.
 P'rkč' in meroy raheč' t'uin.
 zays alersemk' vayelotin.
 asel hogwoc' and hayr merin.*

The (re)writing of the conscious-rousing² text for the healing of this book took place at the expense of Tēr Jacob of Erzerum, sacristan, by the writing hand of Yakob, clerk (*dpir*), in the year of Our Saviour *raheč'* (i.e. *rahe* = 1075).³ We beseech the user to say a *hogwoc'* (commemorative prayer) together with an Our Father.

There are some interlinear transcriptions in cursive (*sheghagir*) in the main colophon on fol. 383a in a nineteenth–twentieth-century hand, possibly that of Kiwlēsērean.

At the time of purchase the manuscript was bound in a tooled reddish brown calf on wooden boards, again dating most probably from the seventeenth century, but the spine and rear cover were damaged. The British Library has since had the manuscript repaired and rebound, replacing the spine completely, supplying the strip of leather torn from the rear cover, and adding the title and number of the manuscript to the spine in gold lettering. The front cover (fig. 2) bears a central metal roundel enclosing a small brass crucifix, with an inscription in Armenian reading 'This cross is in memory of Eva'. Arranged around this are five metal crosses, and traces of rivet holes and a nail indicate that there was once

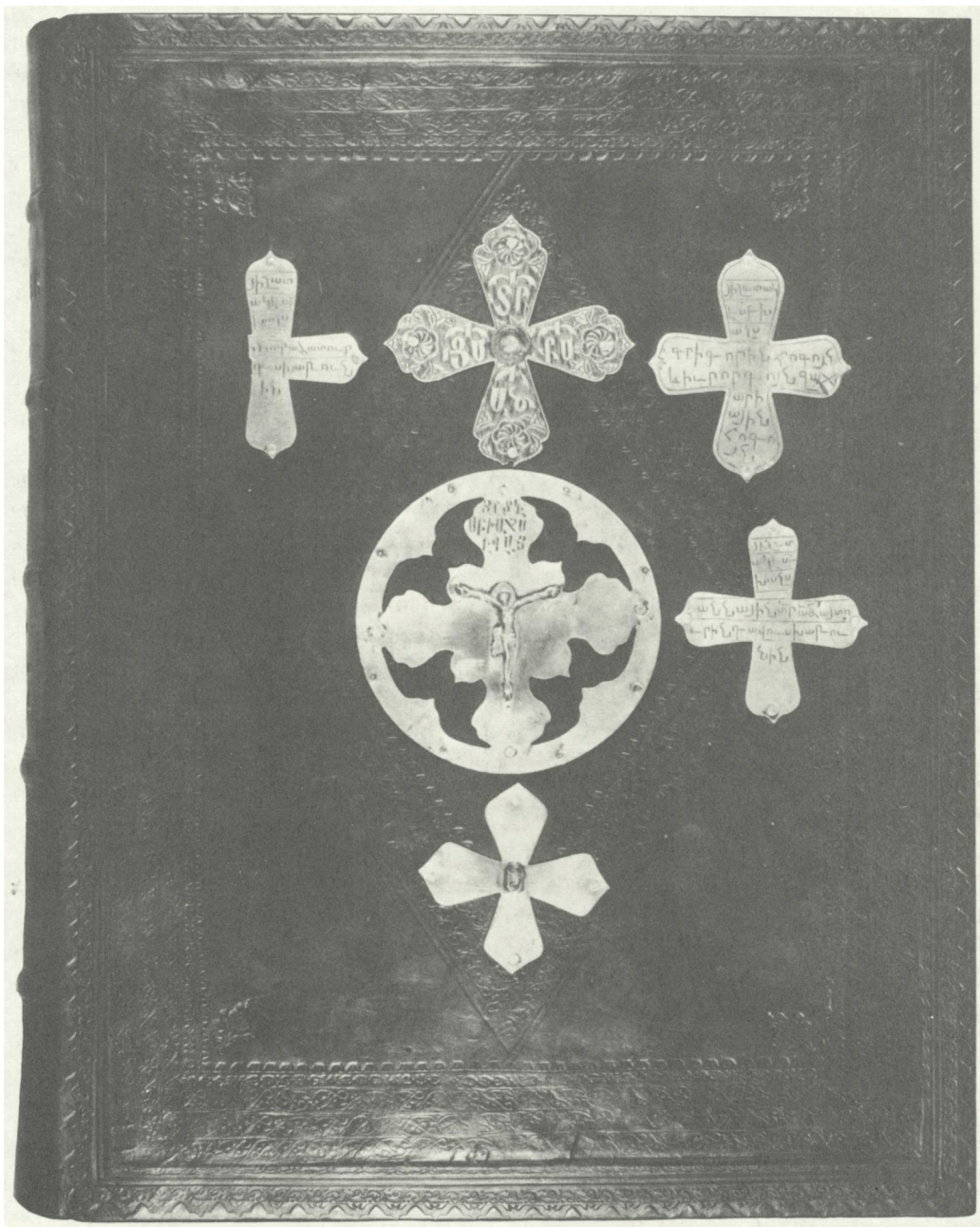


Fig. 2

a sixth. The lower cross was formerly encased with a gem, the owch now empty. The top cross, *pattée* in form, is engraved with a floral device, and bears on the front the inscription, 'The Lord Jesus Christ'; on the rear, concealed, but discovered while the manuscript was being repaired, another inscription reads: (vertically) 'This cross commemorates Vard-ti(k)in,⁴ by the hand of Tēr Karapet'; (horizontally), '(She) is the grandmother of Mariam, Girgor (*sic*, for Grigor),⁵ Arut'iw(n),⁶ deceased(?)'.⁷ The cross to the left, its left arm now broken off, bears part of an inscription doubtless once identical with that of the cross to the right of the centre device, namely, 'This cross is in memory of Anna, Tēr Astuacatur, Davus-khatun'.⁸ To the right of the top cross another bears the inscription, 'This cross is in memory of the soul of Grigor and the soul of his son Zak'aria'. On the rear cover a central metal roundel bears the inscription, 'This holy cross is in memory of Zumrut' ('Esmeralda'),⁹ 1231' (Arm., inc. 7.9.1781).

The main colophon on fols. 380b–383b, to be translated below, records that the manuscript was sponsored by the bishop Tēr Sargis and his brother Ambakum, priest (*k'ahanay*), as a memorial for their paternal uncle Tēr Awetik',¹⁰ bishop, and was completed by the scribe Vardan, clerk (*dpir*), cleric (*krawnawor*), in 649 Arm. (inc. 31.1.1200) in the monastery of Awag Vank' ('Senior Monastery')¹¹ on Mount Sepuh (Kohanam Dagħ, 11 miles south-west of Erzindjan). The scribe Vardan is possibly identical with the Vardan Karnec'i (of Karin, Erzerum) who in 1200–2 copied in this same Awag Vank' a Miscellany (*Čarəntir*), now Erevan (Matenadaran) MS. no. 7729, though here the scribe describes himself as a *k'ahanay*, or secular priest.¹² A memorial notice on fol. 2a relates the arrival of the manuscript in Constantinople with a group of refugees 'from the land of Daranalik', that is, Kamakh' (i.e. the region south-west of Erzindjan) shortly after August, A.D. 1605, and its donation by a certain Seth, son of Yacob and Kost, to the Church of St. Nicholas. Some time later, possibly already in the eighteenth century, the manuscript passed into the Armenian National Library at Galata, Constantinople, the nucleus of which was founded by the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Yovhannēs Kolot of Bitlis (1715–41), at the patriarchate at Kum-Kapī. It was catalogued as MS. no. 6 of this collection between 1902 and 1907 by its then librarian, the *vardapet* Babgen Kiwlēsērean, the future coadjutor Catholicos of Cilicia.¹³ The manuscript was later acquired by Mr. Hagop Kevorkian of New York, to become MS. no. 6 of his collection. It was for a time exhibited at the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.

Although the manuscript has been well studied by Armenian scholars, further study of the text enables one to decipher passages in the main colophon deemed illegible by Kiwlēsērean and Yovsep'ean, who have published it in full,¹⁴ independently of each other. Kiwlēsērean has correctly interpreted a passage inadequately transcribed by Yovsep'ean, namely line 1 of fol. 382b, reading *koč'man imroy* (his col. 32) for Y.'s *koč'* (*lacuna of one word*). The passage may thus be read as '(understanding the duties) of his calling, (he with lamentation approached . . .)'. The full context of these excerpts discussed here will be found in the translations of the memorial notices below. Close examination of the text enables one to interpret a passage on fol. 383a, which has baffled both Y. and K., namely *and hovaneaw surb xoranac's ew* (6 or 7 letters) *elen surb ktakis*. K. reads the doubtful letters

as *awrinak* ‘example’, a reading identical with the attempt at decipherment written in cursive above the passage (and most probably also by K. himself); Y. refers to this gloss as having ‘no sense’ (his col. 646, n. 1). Y. himself reads the doubtful letters as (three letters) *nan*, suggesting, correctly, that the ‘three letters’ may be *awg*, but offering no interpretation. In fact, one can just decipher *awgnan*, and this must be a mistake for *awgna(ka)n* ‘auxiliary’, just as on the same page the scribe has written *pas* for *pa(ka)s* ‘less’, an identical oversight. The phrase may thus read, ‘under the protection of these holy tabernacles and they have become aides (lit. have become helpful) to this holy testament’. On fol. 383b a passage describing the original manuscript upon which the scribe Vardan copied the present Gospels reads *gcagrec’i i stoyg ew yantir awrinakē, amenayn arhestiw li ew patarun, ban* (doubtful words) *ew vasn t’e* (four lines at the head of the second column follow, now completely illegible). The characters after *ban* are supplied by K. as *ew est orum* (holed) *ew vasn t’e*, and by Y., more coherently, as *ban, ew tnhāt, hraman ew sator* (N.B.: two illegible characters) *ew vasn t’e*. The two characters found illegible by Y. can in fact be deciphered as *at*, giving *satorat* for *storat* ‘comma’. The word *tnhat*, a compound of *tun* ‘house’ and *hat*, the root of *hatanem* ‘to cut’ – that as such it needs no conjunct vowel is shown by attested forms like *tnpah* ‘house-porter’ (Bedrossian) – is not listed by the dictionaries in a grammatical sense: the *Arjērñ Bararan* lists *tnahāt* (noun) and *tnahatel* (verb), the latter also listed by *Nor Baṛgirk’ Haykazeān Lezui*, but in the sense of ‘house-breaker’, etc. It is here used in the sense of *tnabažin* ‘dividing verses (point)’ (Bedrossian), *tun* in this context being calqued upon Syriac *beyth* ‘house, verse of hymn, etc.’ The passage may thus be rendered, ‘I transcribed (this manuscript) from a true and select original, full and abundant in every craft, (copying its every) word, verse-division, sentence¹⁵ and comma, and because . . .’ (here, unfortunately, the holes made by the ink in the parchment at the head of the second column still, and probably will always, prevent one from reading the subsequent four lines). A closely parallel formula is used by the contemporary and compatriot scribe Yovhannes in 1201 in a Gospel, subsequently belonging to the Surb Nšani Vank’ in Sebastia (Sivas), copied in a monastery only 20 miles north-east of Awag Vank’, namely Surb Karapeti Vank’, on the slopes of Ak Dagħ.¹⁶ This is reproduced by Yovsep’ean:¹⁷ *ew grec’aw sa y(ə)ntir ew i stoyg yawrin(akē) ew amenayn arhestiw li ew patarun ban ew tnhāt, hraman ew storat, miṣnak, ətur ew vernakēt* ‘and this was written from a select and true original, full and abundant in every craft, (copying its every) word, word-division, sentence and comma, (every punctuation mark) middle,¹⁸ lower¹⁹ and upper.’²⁰

The seventeenth-century memorial notices in the manuscript lie outside the scope of Yovsep’ean’s work, but they have been largely reproduced, in so far as he found them legible, by Kiwlēsērean. The parts of lines 9 and 10 of the memorial notice on fol. 2a which he has, perhaps wisely, refrained from transcribing as ‘obliterated and flown away’ (his col. 35), we have read (below, p. 148) as *yateni i lselis amenec’un | ew aržani lič’in eranawēt jāynin or ašē t’ē ekayk’ ō(r)h(n)ealk’ hōr imoy ew ayln amēn. hayr mer* ‘(are able always to read it) in public for the ears of all shall also be worthy of the text, rich-in-blessings, which says, “Come, (ye) blessed of my Father, etc.” Amen. Our Father’. In the later addition to line 10, Kiwlēsērean has read *złusarat*, intending *złusaṛat* ‘abundant in light’ (since his

form, if it existed as a compound, would mean 'light-blemishing'), as an epithet of 'cathedral', instead of *zhusarar* 'light-maker', 'sacristan', the office of the man Grigor. Among other minor slips he has misread one phrase in the notice on fol. 1b as *ibrew* (*zēn*) *grehac' koxan elak'* (his col. 34). This in fact reads *ibrew zkō* [= *zkaw*] *grehac'*, etc., 'we have been trampled upon as the dirt of the streets', a reference to 2 Sam. 22: 43 and Ps. 17/18: 43.

The manuscript has had an interesting history, much of which has been closely recorded in the various memorial notices. As already noted above, a whole folio has been excised from the main colophon, and doubtless valuable information has been lost. The rest of the colophon, extending over the present fols. 380b to 383b, reads, with the opening homily much abridged, as follows:

By the sevenfold luminous graces of the Holy Spirit . . . In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; everything came into being through him, showing to all the Son consubstantial, associate in glory and fellow creator with the Father, before all eternity [fols. 380b to top of 382a].

And concerning the miracles by divine power which God the Word performed on earth in his united, indivisible and God-mixed body, (namely) the seeing of the blind, the walking of the lame, the cleansing of the lepers, the strengthening of the palsied, the raising of the dead, the casting out of devils, the walking on the sea, and whatever other acts of divine power, (which) by being preached openly throughout the whole world, dispelling the darkness of idolatry, poured the light of the Trinity into the souls of men, wherein ever glorified and rejoiced the catholi[-c, -cos? *One folio has been excised following this word*] . . . of his full brother (. . . *razat*, i.e. <ha>*razat*) Ambakum, Christ-crowned priest (*k'ahanay*), on account of (the) memory (of such as they) supremely renowned, as models of goodness for all bishops and the pride of this holy mountain, their paternal uncle Ter Awetik', who also for a long time held the rank of bishop through the call of the (Holy) Spirit devoting himself to the administration of the holy tomb of our Illuminator (St.) Gregory, and who with great labour and ascetic ways reached a fine old age, acquiring a good and faithful successor, instructed in divine laws by the study of wisdom at (his own) feet, versed in the holiness of ascetics, made worthy (as one) reared-in-holiness of the priesthood, even the rank of bishop. He became his inheritor and coadjutor (*at'orakal*) (in his) old age of his prelacy, and (the bishop himself), seeing his good progress, offered great thanks to God, (and) after some days had passed, understanding the duties of his calling, he with lamentation approached the holy door of the tabernacle and in great reverence accepted the sacrament of salvation, and blessing everyone, (passed away) to rest in Christ; and he now lies (*lit.* stands) on the east side of the chapel of the Holy Illuminator, in which may Christ God give him rest with the intercession of the Illuminator, Amen.

And then with virtuous and zealous hope [reading *yusov* with Y.; K. *yusal*] and advancing [reading *ya'rajeal* with Y.; K. *ya'rajanal*] in all good-deeds with famous good-renown, he also by dint of much labour acquired a most magnificent (commemorative) feast (*tawnakan*) in memory of himself and his parents; and then, having so begun, with desires (stemming from) love of Christ, with great longing, heartfelt enthusiasm and true-believing hope, he had this holy Gospel written for the salvation of his life and for the illumination of his soul, an eternal treasure and unplunderable riches, for the glory of the Holy Church and the joy of our gracious mother New Sion in her many and bitter labours.

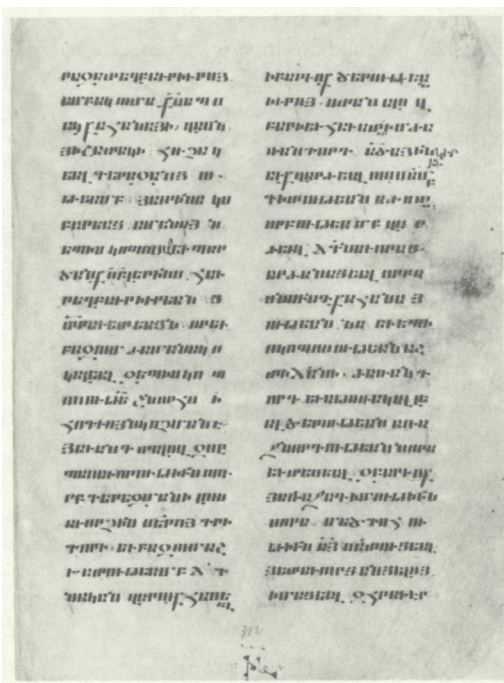


Fig. 3a

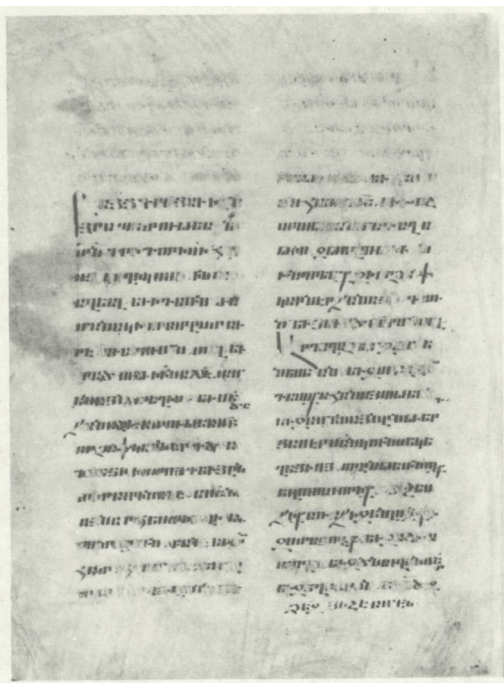


Fig. 3d

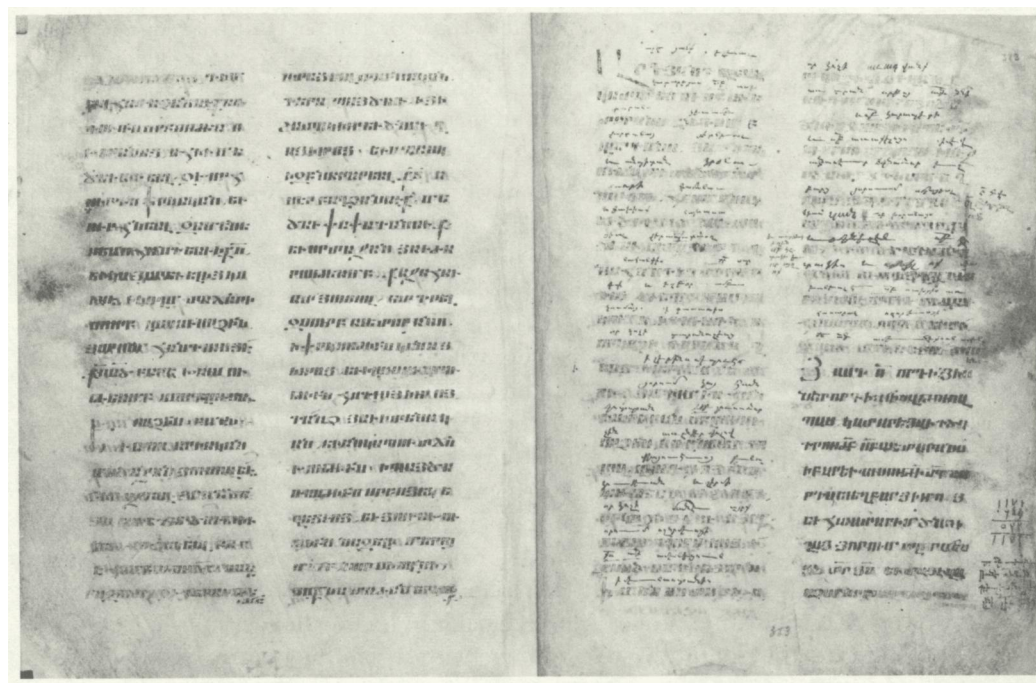


Fig. 3b, c

Now this holy Gospel has been completed and finished by the hand of Vardan, backward and useless monk (*krawnawor*), at the command and at the expense of the afore-mentioned overseer (*veraditol*, i.e. bishop) of our province, Tēr Sargis and (his) brother Ambakum, in this canton which is called Daranalik', on this Mount Sepuh, on which lies the resting-place of the Holy Illuminator, adjacent to the dwelling and tomb of the martyress, which is called the Caves of Manē, on whom may Christ God have mercy, on all in this monastery, which is called Awag Vank' ['Senior Monastery', so-called because it is by the tomb of the Illuminator],²¹ at the gate of (the chapels of) the Holy Theotokos and the Holy Precursor and the Holy Apostles, among God-loving ascetic brothers, in which (monastery) they are fortified under the protection of these holy tabernacles and have become the aides of this holy testament. And whoever else is associated (*miabaneal*) with this holy order (*uxt*), may Christ God have mercy upon all. Amen.

In the year 600 and fifty minus one [i.e. 649 Arm., inc. 31 January A.D. 1200]²² this holy Gospel was completed in writing²³ for the intercession²⁴ of Tēr Sargis and his brothers and (true-)believing parents, upon whom (*sg!*) may the Lord Jesus have mercy and give wages of good-things according to . . .²⁵ of him.²⁶

[*The first five lines of fol. 383va are eaten away by the tannic acid of the ink, and are completely illegible.*]

But it was written in the patriarchate of Ter Grigoris, Catholicos of Armenia,²⁷ in a dark and bitter time, when day by day pillage, famine, and pestilence increase in all places, and with zealous labour, as far as it was in my power, I transcribed (this manuscript) from a true and select original, full and abundant in every craft, (copying its every) word, verse-division, sentence and comma, and because . . .

[*The first four lines of fol. 383vb are illegible.*]

. . . <for my wea>kness²⁸ and for (my) immaturity, and the coarseness of this parchment, we ask forgiveness; for as far as was in my power, I laboured, with a bitter(ly distressed) and painful body. Now I beseech all, both you holy ranks of the priesthood and all the book-loving children of the Church, who read and illumine yourselves, remember in front of the sacrifice of Christ the acquirers and labourers and our parents and brothers, and God (shall) remember you. Amen.

As with many manuscripts, the memorial notices provide a commentary on Armenian life through the centuries. The scribe Vardan, writing in 1200, represents his own age as 'a dark and bitter time, when day by day pillage, famine and pestilence increase in all places'. One cannot presume to contradict him. In those days the lives of many men were doubtless, if no longer solitary and entirely brutish, still too often poor, nasty, and short. Yet only the year before, in 1199, King Leo I of Cilician Armenia had been crowned amid great pomp in the Cathedral of Tarsus by the Catholicos Grigoris Apirat whom Vardan mentions in his colophon, on the threshold of a century that marked a high point in the history of Armenian art and culture. Conditions outside Cilicia, under direct Armenian rule, would not have been so favourable to Armenians, but there is evidence that they were not utterly intolerable. Ani/Kemakh, the principal town of the canton of Daranalik', formed in 1200 part of the Turkish Mangujakid principality of Erzindjan, the eponymous founder of which had in fact operated from the fortress of Kemakh when threatening Malatya in 1118. Erzindjan, 25 miles from Kemakh to the north-east up the Euphrates, was the most important city in the area, and one with which the political fortunes – and,

as we shall see below, the artistic activity – of Kemakh and the monasteries near by were accordingly closely linked. At the time of the copying of the Awag Vank' Gospels the principality of Erzindjan was ruled by the enlightened Fakhr-al-Din Bahrāmshāh, to whom Nizāmī dedicated a poem in 1198/9, and who died in 1225. Of him Ibn Bibī, the historian of the Seljuks, writes:

In the course of his reign no marriage or funeral ever took place in Erzindjan without vessels and victuals coming from his kitchen or which was not honoured by his presence. And in the winter, when as a present from the white snow-clouds hills and plains were clothed in coats of mail and robes of feathers, he would command corn to be transported on carts into the mountains and plains and scattered all around, so that food might be provided for the birds and the wild beasts. Nizami from Gandja [d. 1203] dedicated his book *Maḥzan al-Asrar* to him and sent it as a gift. As a recompense he gave him five thousand dinars and five mettlesome mules.²⁹

The history of this manuscript is continued in a memorial notice consisting of eleven lines of *nōtragir* in the lower margin of fol. 2a, and a note in the right margin of four words in the same hand. A complicated chronological sum shows the date of this notice to be the year 1605, on 22 August according to the Julian calendar current among the Orthodox of Turkey until the twentieth century, that is 1 September New (Gregorian) Style (fig. 4).

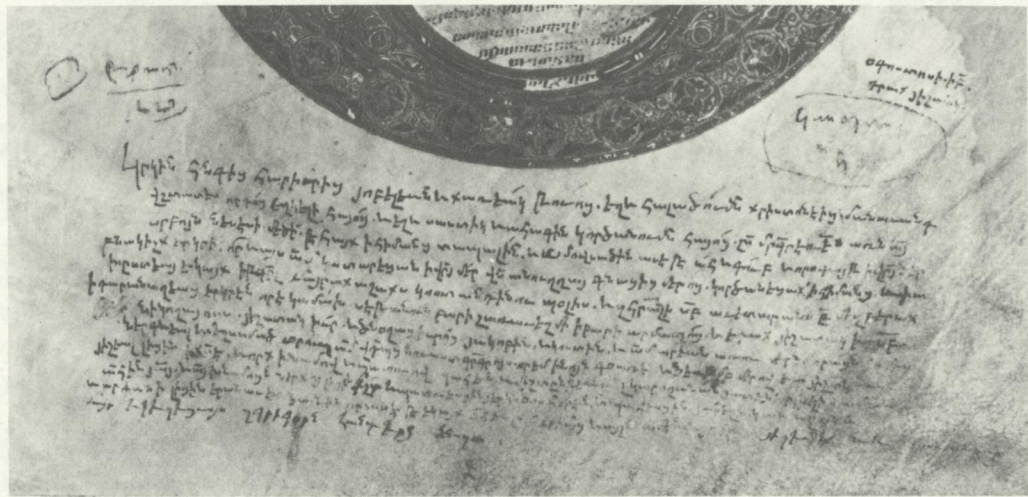


Fig. 4

In the year twice five hundred, a jubilee and a quaternity [a note in the same hand in the right margin adds, 'the memorial-notice was placed (here) on 22nd August'],³⁰ a persecution of Christians took place, above all of the sons of the unfortunate Armenians who-have-seen-suffering, and there occurred a violent and terrible massacre of the Armenians in accordance with the prophecy of that man of God, St. Nersēs,³¹ (namely) that 'Armenia shall be (*lit.* is) overthrown from its foundations',³² and he-born-of-Amos says, 'Fear, and the pit, and the snare (are) upon you, inhabitants of the earth' [Isa. 24: 17] – all of which was fulfilled upon us on account of our

unstraight ways. We have been destroyed from the foundations, and we have fled and come to the regnant metropolis Constantinople, and we have brought this wonderful gospel with us from the land of Daranalik⁶, which is Kamakh, (we including one) called Seth, a good scion from a good root; and we have placed (it) as a memorial in (the church) of St. Nicholas in memory of oneself and one's parents Yakob and Kost³³ and all blood relations (of the) male (line), and for ourselves, the weak and sin-clotted humblest of all vardapets, the thrice contemptible Grigor, who am from the same canton, and by our hand we gave³⁴ it as a memorial. Those who remember shall be remembered by Christ, and those who preserve it with care and reverence and are able always to read it (aloud) in public for the ears of all shall also be worthy of the text, rich-in-blessings, which says, 'Come, (ye) blessed of my Father, etc.' [Matt. 25: 34], Amen. Our Father. [A later note, possibly eighteenth century, in *nōtragir*, adds] Remember also the sacristan of this metropolitan (*lit.* mother) church Grigor, together with his parents.

Some three and a half years later, at the beginning of 1609, the following four-line notice in *nōtragir*, probably by the same hand, but less cramped, was added to the lower margin of fol. 1b, to face that on fol. 2a (fig. 5).

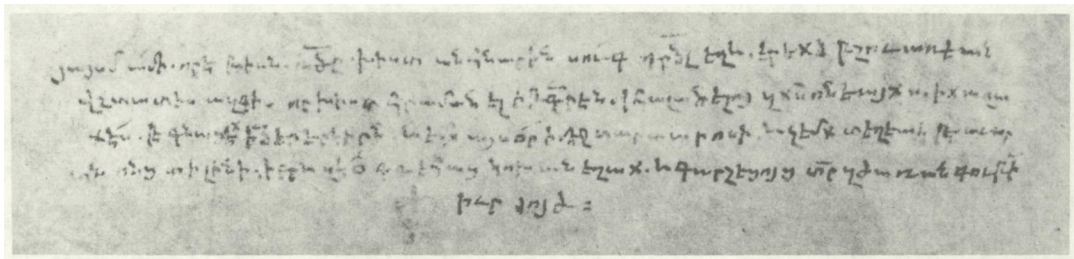


Fig. 5

In this year, the year 1058 [inc. 20 October A.D. 1608] severe, enormous affliction came again upon (our) thrice wretched nation, which-has-seen-much misery, when³⁵ a severe command came from the king [Sultan Ahmed I, 1603–17] to drive us Christians from this town, (saying) 'Go to your (own) country'; and we are today in the midst of Tartarus,³⁶ and we do not know what the end will be.³⁷ We have been trampled upon as 'the mire of the streets' [2 Sam. 22: 43, Ps. 17/18: 43] and the Lord has 'abhorred his heritage greatly' [Ps. 105/6: 40].

These two memorials are historically closely linked. An American-Armenian writer of the present time has likened such poignant passages in the long 'litany of lamentations' that has accompanied Armenia's march through history to 'messages in bottles, messages from some long-ago sea wreck, messages written by men',³⁸ and indeed, although the vardapet Grigor from Kemakh was mainly concerned that the history of the 'wonderful gospel' in his care should be recorded in its own pages, there is no doubt that the four-hundred-years-old manuscript was an ideal means of conveying the record of a persecution of his community for future centuries. Nigh on four hundred years afterwards, at all events, in 1975, it has reached London.

The circumstances in which Seth and Grigor were driven from the region of Kemakh and compelled to take refuge in the capital in 1605 form part of the history of the decline of the Ottoman Empire occasioned by costly wars with Persia and Europe, and hastened by the ruinous misdeeds of the djelalis, marauding bands of rebel soldiers, in Anatolia. The Armenians became entangled in these events. Towards the end of 1604, when winter had already come,³⁹ the Persian king, Shah Abbas I, retreating before the autumn offensive of Sultan Ahmed I, forcibly transported the inhabitants of the Turkish-Persian border regions across the Araxes and settled those who survived near his capital Isfahan in New Jilfa. This the chronicler Arak'el calls 'the great sürgün' (exile, expulsion),⁴⁰ the Turkish term used to describe the event of 1609 referred to in the second of the seventeenth-century memorial notices reproduced above.⁴¹ Further west, in central Anatolia, the Armenians had to contend with the internal disorders of the Ottoman Empire, and it is these with which the two notices are linked.

The havoc wrought within the Armenian lands in Anatolia by the djelalis, led until his defeat in 1602 by the so-called Kara Yazidji ('Black Scrivener'), and thereafter less organized but still very dangerous, is recorded in the colophon of a menologium copied by Martiros of Khizan, finished, after a delay of seven to eight years due to the rebellion, in 1603/4:

How many evils did he commit upon the lands of the House of Rum! Here in Tokat, Kayseri, Ankara, Marzman, Amasia, Erzindjan, Gharasar, and everywhere, he committed so many crimes that I am unable to write them down . . . How many priests and deacons of the church did he kill and martyr! how many fathers and mothers did he make childless, and sisters brotherless, let alone the fact that he led 800 innocent children captive from Sivas. After that he was killed himself.⁴²

A native of Tokat, Andreas, described the effect of Yazidji's actions on his town:

In the year 1050 [inc. 22.10.1600] Kara Yazidji came to Sivas, burnt it, plundered it, and massacred many people. Thence, in the year 1051 [inc. 22.10.1601] he came to Tokat, Zilleh, Amasia and Marsivan, and to this whole house of Rum (*yamenayn Hormac' tuns*) from Urfa to Scutari, including the seashores and villages. He stayed for 90 days in Tokat, and the citizens abandoned all their houses and lands (lit. places), their goods and chattels, and fled, while he inherited the lot, carrying off handsome boys and church ornaments, crosses, gospels, chalices, chasubles and every other (piece of) furnishing and vessel. Woe is me, a thousand mouths [would not suffice to tell it all?].⁴³

After Yazidji's death the rebels continued to maraud throughout Anatolia, and the situation with which Ahmed I had to contend in the year 1608 happens to be described by Serapion of Bayburt, the scribe of a manuscript copied at Trebizond in that year:⁴⁴

. . . the great wild-beast and evil snake, the mad dog, the filthy Ali Pasha, son of Djan-polad, who assembled a great force of 60,000 footsoldiers and a greater and nowise lesser number of cavalry and seized the land of Tiberia which is Aleppo . . . And rebelling against this same evil one was the evil and pestilential filthy Thawul, ten times worse than he, and he came with 10,000 horsemen into Cilicia and took Adana, Tarsus, Sis, Kars, and wrought much havoc and carried away

500 male children as prisoners back to Adana. And thence he marched upon the land of Marash and plundered it, and then arrived in Sivas, and thence came to the canton of Ekeleac' [region of Erzindjan], and devastated it a second and a third time, as the filthy bloodthirsty one was wont to do. And thence he returned to Konya, Galatia, Kastamoni, and from there to the Black Sea (*i mecn Pontos*), to Trebizond here, and he burned down this town and went a second time to Erzindjan. But the Lord did not desire the destruction of mankind, and gave power to the white-haired Murad Pasha, who arrived with a large army and seized the high and mighty (Ali Pasha) son of Djanpolad, and mercilessly slew him and put him himself (*zink'n*, Djanpolad?) to flight and razed every house and wrought many other acts of destruction in the land of Tiberia, and then advanced against the evil one called Thawul. And he came to the great plain of Taron and slew them unsparingly and put a few of them to flight back to the Kizilbash. And the valiant old man . . . took up position in the great plain of Bayburt [i.e. c. 75 miles north-east of Kemakh] and sent out his forces hither and thither, and finding many of the rebel barons and pashas, he put them to the sword, and whomsoever (else) they found (in rebellion?) they brought back and slew, and (so) brought great peace upon the land.

Another account showing the economic consequences of the djelalis for the Armenian area is given by another scribe, Awetik':

All these (persons above enumerated) were djelalis, who would not obey the king (sultan) and never dwelt in any fixed abode; wherever they heard a rumour of prosperity, they made straight for that place, and they plundered and set fire to prosperous-settlements from Constantinople to Erevan, from Baghdad to the Cilician Gates (Damur Ėap'u = Demir Kapı), everything between the White Sea (Mediterranean) and the Black Sea – so many countries did they put to wrack and ruin. And for this reason the tillers and landworkers fled in terror, and the land lay fallow; and there was no more sowing and ploughing, therefore threshing-floor and seed were no more (*barjaw kal ew kut*), and bread began to grow scarce, and for want of victuals men began to eat the animals, the oxen and sheep; and when the clean animals were gone, they began to eat the unclean animals, the horse, the mule and the ass, even the dog and the cat; and when the famine grew even more severe they began to eat dead bodies, and then proceeded to seize men alive and eat them. Alas for the ears-that-must-hear it, O readers! The beginning of this famine was in the year 1055 (inc. 21.10.1605), in which year the famine was mild, and in 1056 (inc. 21.10.1606) and 1057 (inc. 21.10.1607) it much intensified, and in 1068 (inc. 20.10.1608) it let up, and in 1059 (inc. 21.10.1609) it went, by the mercy of God, who is not wroth with his creation to their utter extinction.⁴⁵

The perpetration of the *halacumn* or 'persecution' to which the scribe Grigor refers need not necessarily have been the work of the djelalis. The Armenians have a proverb: 'The horse and the mule had a fight, and the ass disappeared underfoot.'⁴⁶ An example showing the Armenians caught between two fires, and suffering a bestial form of physical ill-treatment, probably a primitive method of emasculation for the provision of eunuchs to tend the harems of the senior officers on the campaign, is related in a passage attributed to Grigor Daranalc'i, to whom ample reference will be made below, as occurring in Anatolian regions including Kemakh four or five years prior to the flight to Constantinople:

In the year 1051 [inc. 22.10.1601 O.S.] armies came from the east, castellans and provincial governors from the upper regions of the country. The prefects and envoys marched laboriously

against Yazidji, to defeat and destroy him. But they proved in no wise energetic in that respect, but arrived with 50,000 horsemen and squatted in the much-suffering (*všitates*), pitiable and unhappy (city of) Erzindjan, plundering it and bringing down upon it untold affliction and misery. They sat there for two and a half months, in such force. And they would seize men and bare their testicles, cover them with a handkerchief and gnaw them with their teeth. This they did to seven men, who died from the dreadful agony. And plundering many places, Divriği, Kamakh, Erzindjan and wherever they marauded, they returned and went back to their own lands. And they did not march against Yazidji.⁴⁷

The same writer, himself much embroiled, as we shall see, in the disorders to which the memorial notices refer, speaks, under the rubric 1043 Arm. (1593/4), of

our own time, which has become violent and frantic . . . Law is abolished, there is no judicial-enquiry or justice for those despoiled. They have become like huge fish who swallow the little ones, according to the saying of Habbakuk [misquotation of Hab. 1: 14]. It seems that the measure of their sins is full, for they are much confounded and rise one against the other within their country and seize each other without any foreign foes (being involved); but a man's enemies are his own family. Everything stems from the freewill (given Man) by God, on account of our unstraight ways. Many countries have become unpopulated and ruins multiply. All the revelations of the saints have been fulfilled, and are still fulfilled one after the other, (and) we do not know what the end will be.⁴⁸

In another place the same writer complains of

this unkind time, for a quarter of the world has been destroyed by the many maraudings of the Ishmaelites; all the lands are in anarchy, and all go astray like sheep without a shepherd. There is no consolation from anyone, and no-one to gather the scattered together, and on all sides affliction besets us, and the word of the prophet Isaiah has come to pass, which says that 'Fear, and the pit, and the snare (are) upon you, inhabitants of the earth, and he who flees from the terror shall fall into the pit, and he who climbs out of the pit shall be caught in the snare' [Isa. 24: 17-18].⁴⁹

Such were the realities of the Ottoman *dhimmah* ('responsibility') by the first decade of the seventeenth century. It is not surprising that Anatolia, its rugged interior ever dependent for its successful exploitation on an industrious and unharassed peasantry, plunged into a rapid, and definitive, decline.

The richer Anatolians began to migrate to the Balkans, the Crimea, Iran and the Arab lands; the land was left fallow, hunger and famine followed, and the Treasury lost its sources of revenue . . . In the same period brigandry became widespread. Heavy taxes, corruption and insecurity led to the first large-scale rebellions of the *reāyā*. The celali period came at a time of great financial crisis, dragging the empire into a decline from which it never recovered. In 1607 the English ambassador wrote from Istanbul: 'As far as I can see, the Turkish Empire was in great decline, almost ruined.'⁵⁰

One of the results of the acts of war and rebellion in the East was a large concourse of refugees in Constantinople, Tekirdagh (Thrace), and other parts of European Turkey.

Seth and Grigor and their companions, jealously guarding their treasured possession, the Awag Vank' Gospels, were among them, the *halacumn* ('persecution') of which Grigor complains being surely at the hands of the djelalis, or other Muslims benefiting by the disorders caused by them. Between 1605 and 1609 the refugees from the Kemakh region settled down in and around the capital. At the end of 1608, however, the Grand Vizier Murad Pasha returned to Constantinople after his crushing defeat of the djelalis and their leader Ali Pasha, called Djanpuladoghlu. An immediate consequence was that the refugees thronging the capital and other cities of European Turkey were ordered to return to their homes in Anatolia by the 'severe command' of Ahmet I, an event referred to by Turkish Armenian historians, as we have mentioned,⁵¹ as a *sürgün*, an 'exile', as a cause of great despair. One can understand their reluctance to return to regions where they had but a few years previously been subjected to persecution, and where, as the memorialist says, they knew not what awaited them. But a return home is not an exile, and the refugees might reasonably be expected to prosper more in their homeland than in a very real exile in Constantinople. The Sultan's edict was no doubt partly aimed at reducing congestion in the capital. It must also have been intended to repopulate and reinvigorate the stricken regions in Anatolia, upon which Murad Pasha, who as Grand Vizier must have been responsible for the edict, would have reported on his return. A similar concern is behind an action on the part of Ahmet's son, Murat IV, later in the century. In his account of the latter's reign, Sir Paul Rycaud relates:

By this time (1635) Morat was arrived at Erzurum, which is a city belonging to the Turks on the confines of Persia, where the first act which he performed of justice was to cut off the head of the Pasha for his oppression and extortions inflicted on his people. Entering into Armenia, he was grieved to see the upper and lower provinces so miserably destroyed and wasted by the war; to recover which, he commanded the people, under pain of death, to return again to their ancient habitations within the space of twenty days; but they being settled in other cities, where perhaps they had purchased houses and lands, could not possibly comply with the severity of the decree, and therefore were constrained to buy a dispensation and release from the penalty for a sum of money.

An account of this event is given in another Kevorkian Collection MS. copied by Gaspar of Akn who calls himself a pupil of Grigor of Daranalik', who lent him the autograph copy of Grigor of Tathev's *Book of Questions* from which he (Gaspar) copied his in 1635:

Again, in 1084 (A.D. 1635), on Saturday, 28 February, on the Feast of John, patriarch of Jerusalem, in the 14th year of his reign, the same king, Sultan Murad, marched to war against Persia, and arriving at Kayseri in Cappadocia, he sent a decree to Istanbul concerning the *sürgün*, which was in this form, that the Armenians, Greeks and Turks who from up to 40 years previously had come (to the capital) from the eastern region should go back to their own land and remain no longer in the city. And the command reached Bayram Pasha, the city's overseer, who had it carried out immediately, for in the same year, on Thursday, 19 May, the bad news (was) in the mouth of the munetik, who shouted like Jonah to the effect that in twenty days' time no-one from the eastern regions should be found in Istanbul, and if anyone were found, he should die

a painful death. When they heard this, all scattered over the face of the earth, in accordance with the words of David, 'their seed shall be scattered among the nations' [Ps. 105/6: 27], etc. Again in the same year 1084, while he was at war with the Persians, (it was Murad) who took Vagharshapat and came to and plundered the town of Shahastan. [Present writer's translation, Sotheby's, 2 May 1977, 182, p. 92.]

The terms of Ahmet I's decree in 1608 demanded that all refugees who had settled in Constantinople, Tekirdagh, etc., should return to their former homes in Anatolia within three months, and in the spring of 1609, thus well within the Armenian year 1058, beginning on 20 October 1608, mentioned by our memorialist, a caravan composed of more than 7,000 Armenians and Turks, including our memorialist, departed from Scutari. We are fortunate in that the leader of the caravan, an Armenian bishop who was himself from the region of Daranalik⁶ where our manuscript originated, and was now returning, has left an account of the march, a trek of more than one thousand kilometres towards the East. This was the colourful vardapet Grigor Daranalci⁷ (1576–1643), who was surnamed *Buk⁸* (Western pronunciation *Puk⁹*), that is, 'Snowstorm', on account of the numerous stormy encounters with church authorities for which he was notorious. His account of this forced march, ignored by Ottoman historians, is included in his manuscript chronicle now forming part of the collection of St. James, Jerusalem, as MS. no. 1069,⁵³ edited and published in Jerusalem in 1915.⁵⁴ This chronicle has been extensively drawn upon by M. Hayk Berberian in 1949 in his monograph on the Armenian forced marches of 1609 and 1635,⁵⁵ to which the present writer is much indebted.

From the time of its promulgation town criers announced the Sultan's edict in the streets of Constantinople during the first three days of the quarter allowed, possibly January, February, and March, warning that those refugees who did not depart willingly would be forcibly deported. As later in 1635, some managed to escape the *sürgün*, by bribes, protection by high officials, by claiming exemption as workers engaged on the new Sultan Ahmed mosque, or, in Tekirdagh, as essential agricultural labourers. Others escaped by 'slipping off in all directions',⁵⁶ so that when Grigor eventually returned to the capital in 1612, he was astounded to find so many of his old congregation from Kemakh still there. In 1609 Grigor prevaricated and pleaded with the authorities as much as he could, but finally, in the spring, the caravan departed. It was no procession of paupers. The indications are that many of the refugees had greatly flourished in the capital and the towns of European Turkey. Some members possessed as much as 500 gold pounds, while others boasted of far greater sums. Some had their possessions laden on as many as five mules, while every family would have had at least one. Grigor, after complaining that the authorities had appointed no official leader for his 'flock of shepherdless sheep', assumed authority, and appointed as armed security guards two Armenian janissaries from the villages of Kemakh who were returning home on leave. Grigor divided the party into two main groups: the leading group was composed mainly of Turks, with a few Armenians from divers regions, placed in the charge of the priest (*k'ahanay*) Tēr Minas from Arapkir; the second, composed mainly of Armenians from Grigor's own region of Kemakh, was led by himself. Apart from a scare at Tosya, which was terrorized by a djelali called Murtad,

but who, in the opinion of Grigor, was deterred from attacking the caravan by the well-armed archers and swordsmen who guarded it, the caravan proceeded peacefully to Niksar. Here the caravan broke up, its members proceeding to their own villages or to whatever place they had decided upon. The families from Kemakh proceeded thither with their bishop, and dispersed to their several villages, 'at the advent of winter', probably in late August, which, as M. Berberian points out,⁵⁷ means that the caravan travelled very slowly. But it was, after all, a group of reluctant refugees of all ages, fearful of what they might find at their destination, not a camel train of eager merchants. If they dragged their feet, one can well understand them. Their leader and chronicler records no deaths on the way, which suggests at least that those which might have occurred were not due to unnatural causes.

The historical value of the Awag Vank^c Gospels as a contemporary witness of events is enhanced by the strong probability that 'the weak and sin-clotted humblest of all vardapets, the thrice contemptible Grigor, who am from the same canton [of Daranalik^c]', who placed the Gospel in the safe keeping of the Church of St. Nicholas in Constantinople and, probably, recorded on fol. 1b the beginning of the *sürgün*, was none other than its leader, Grigor Daranalcⁱ, surnamed Buk^c. I have not yet had the opportunity of comparing the hand or hands of the memorial notices under discussion with the autograph history and other material by Grigor Daranalcⁱ preserved at St. James in Jerusalem, which could decide the matter. But many features of the style and content of the Gospel's memorial notices are paralleled by the like in writings reliably attributed to Grigor Daranalcⁱ. Both Grigors, if one can divide them, are learned, well versed in the Scriptures, and lament the iniquities of their age. Both call themselves *trup amenayn vardapetac^c* 'humble(st) of all vardapets'. Both the memorialist of fol. 1b and Grigor Daranalcⁱ say 'we do not know what the end will be', though with slightly differing grammatical forms (*č'emk^c teleak t'ē awartn onc^c ti lini* (fol. 1b); *č'i gitemk^c t'ē awartn zinc^c lineloc^c ē* (Grigor Daranalcⁱ)).⁵⁸ Both Grigors quote Isaiah 24: 17: 'Fear, and the pit, and the snare (are) upon you, inhabitants of the earth.'⁵⁹ Both attribute Armenia's misfortunes to 'our unstraight ways'.⁶⁰ It is a minor point, perhaps, but both use the epithet *vštates* 'having seen suffering'.⁶¹ The evidence must remain circumstantial until a confrontation of autographs can be made, but it strongly suggests that Grigor Daranalcⁱ, surnamed Buk^c, was the author of the memorial notices on fols. 1b, 2a of the Awag Vank^c Gospels.

The phrase 'from this town' in the notice on fol. 1b means that it was written on the Gospel when the latter was in Constantinople. Whether or not the refugees took it back with them to Kemakh in 1609 one cannot know for sure. If the epithet 'wonderful' (*hirašali*) attached to it by the scribe Grigor means that it was held, like other Armenian gospels,⁶² to be wonder-working, there would have been good reason to do so. In any case, the Gospels seem to have been regarded as a holy and tangible symbol of the reality of the Armenian community of Kemakh. The statement, however, that it was placed as a memorial in the Church of St. Nicholas in the capital suggests that it was unlikely, for reasons of piety and honour, to be withdrawn again. The repair work carried out in 1625/6, according to the notice in fol. 181b, at the expense of the sacristan Tēr Yakob of Erzerum, could have been

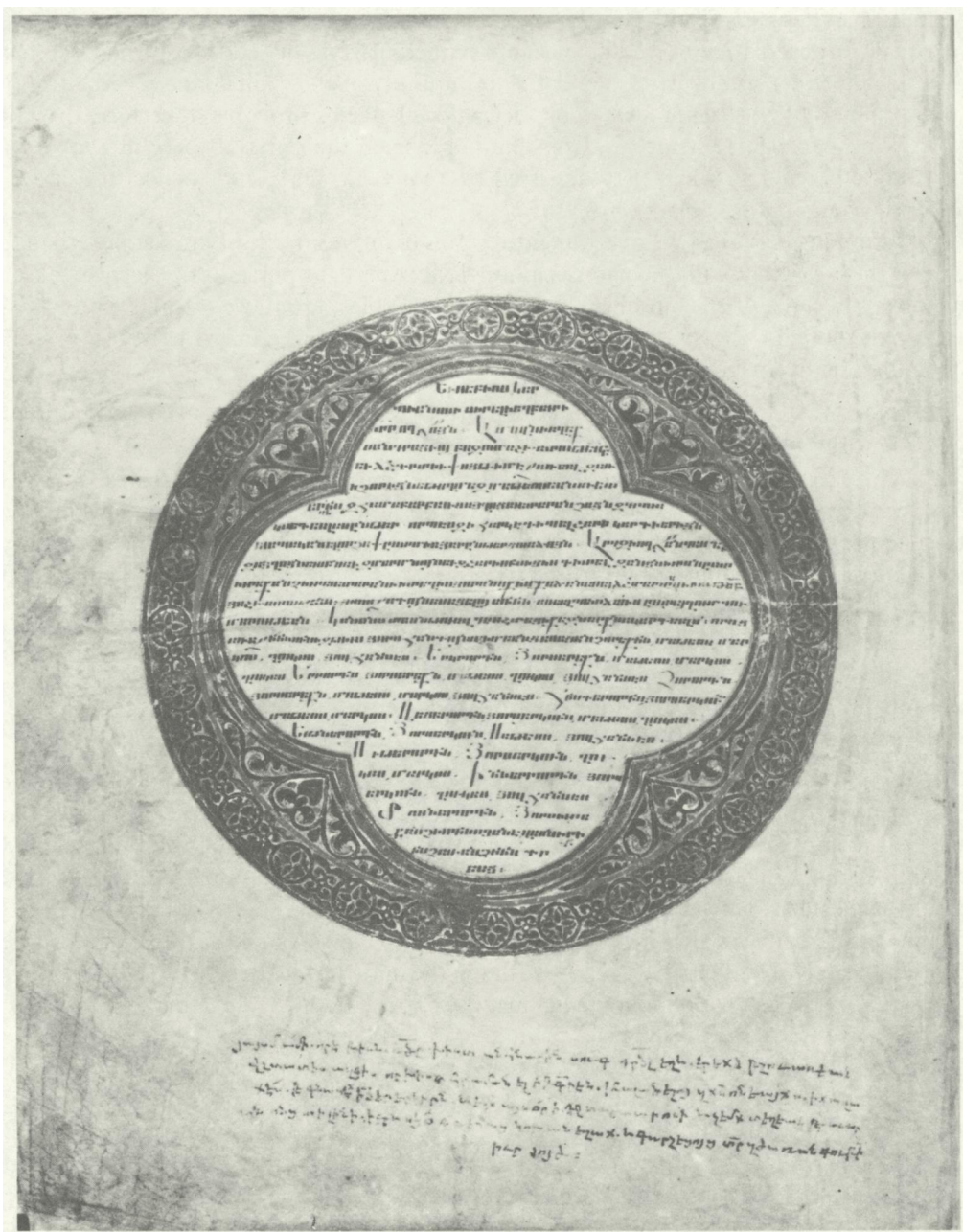


Fig. 6

executed in either region, and with the same end, namely, to restore its practical usefulness for ritual purposes in church. The elegant, exuberant style of the scribe Yakob seems, however, more consistent with the relative tranquillity of the capital, and has the feel (it can be no more than that) of *şehir işi* or 'city work'. It seems probable, therefore, that the Awag Vank' Gospels remained in Constantinople from their arrival there in 1605 until the twentieth century, when they departed first for New York, and thence to London. *Historia temporis nostri semper obscurissima.*

Apart from its historical value, the manuscript is of interest for its illuminations, though some of those originally in the manuscript, including perhaps portraits of the evangelists, and certainly some of the Eusebian Concordance Tables, are now missing. The text is decorated, though sparsely, with marginal ornaments and large initial letters in colours and gold. The full-page decorations now comprise:

fol. 1b, 2a: The letter of Eusebius to Carpianus, enclosed in two large decorative roundels with floral motifs, in colours and gold, but no portraits (fig. 6).

fol. 3b, 4a, 5b, 6a: Eusebian Concordance Tables, nos. 10, 5, 6-7 (tables nos. 1-4, 8-9 are now missing, the first fascicle of the manuscript now containing only six folios). The pericope numbers are enclosed between various coloured columns flanked by imaginary trees and plants surmounted by birds, beneath large headpieces (*khoran-s*) flanked and surmounted by flowers, peacocks, and other birds (fig. 7).

fol. 7a, 117a, 182a, 299a: The title-pages of the Gospels according to Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John respectively (figs. 8-11), decorated in colours and gold, and now, but probably not originally, bearing representations of the evangelist's respective symbol, to be discussed below.

One has insufficient material upon which to generalize about the characteristics of the Awag Vank' scriptorium. The decorations of the present Gospels, restricted in scope, in that they comprise only roundels enclosing the Letter of Eusebius, headpieces and columns surrounding the Eusebian Concordance Tables, and the title-pages of the gospels, are for the most part very finely executed in a style strongly reminiscent of the art of Little, or Cilician, Armenia, which in the year 1200 was on the threshold of its apogee, to be represented above all others by Thoros Roslin in the mid-thirteenth century. On the other hand, another closely contemporaneous manuscript copied at Awag Vank', a Gospel of A.D. 1201,⁶³ differs greatly in style, having more in common with the art of Greater Armenia.⁶⁴ The scriptorium of Awag Vank', like the main town of the canton of Daranalik', Kemakh, both less than thirty miles from Erzindjan and certainly, as mentioned above,⁶⁵ within the political orbit of this important city in A.D. 1200, would largely depend upon it for its more sophisticated materials, such as the rarer mineral pigments and gold leaf (sparingly used at Awag Vank'), as well as important patronage, and may be reckoned to fall within its artistic sphere of influence. Again, the lack of surviving examples make it impossible to generalize upon the general style of an Erzindjan School, though the famous Erzindjan Bible of A.D. 1269,⁶⁶ which Professor Der Nersessian has called one of the masterpieces of Armenian illumination,⁶⁷ shows that it is very distinct from that of Cilicia. Der

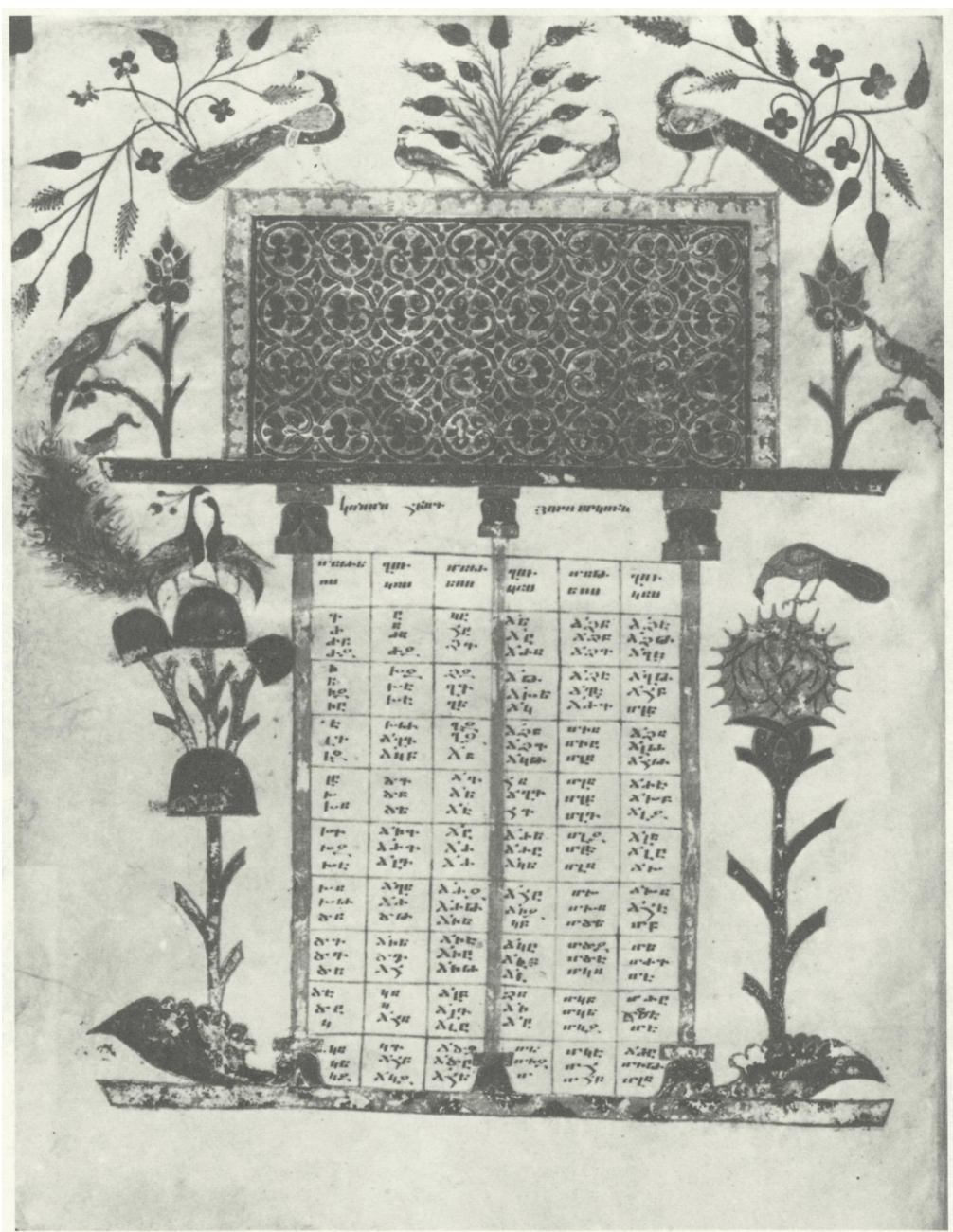


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

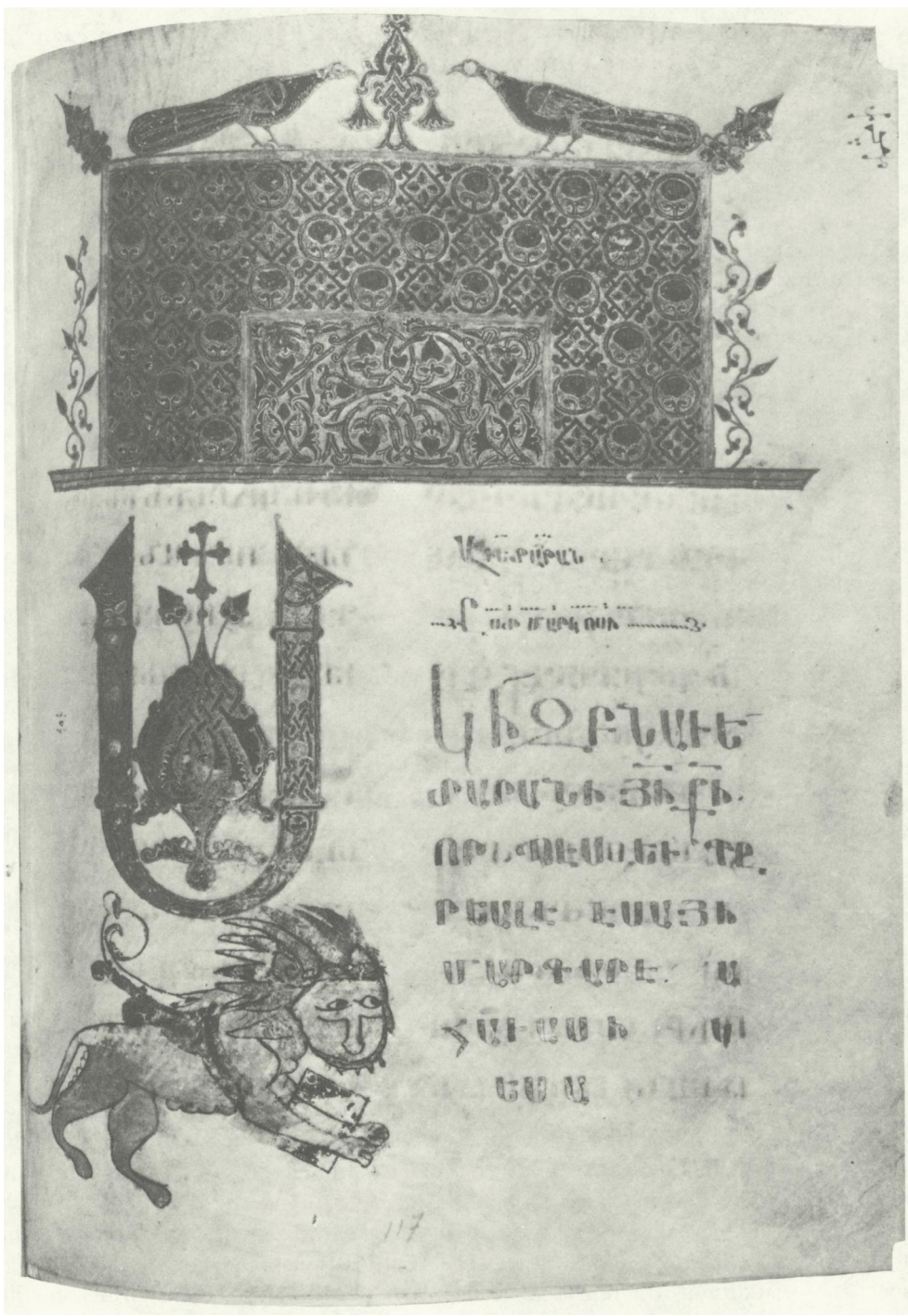


Fig. 9

Nersessian does not hesitate to subsume the Awag Vank^c Gospels within an Erzindjan School, and with much historical justification:

Au XIII^e siècle la ville d'Erznka se trouvait sous la domination mongole.⁶⁸ Grâce à sa situation géographique elle était un centre commercial important, participant au commerce de transit et exportant ses produits artisanaux, en particulier les soieries et autres tissus qui étaient très recherchés. Pendant cette période et au XIV^e siècle Erznka a été aussi un centre intellectuel où travaillaient des écrivains tels Hovhannes Plouz, Kirakos, Movses et Mekhit^car d'Erznka. La Bible de Jérusalem témoigne que l'art de l'enluminure y avait aussi atteint un haut degré, mais malheureusement peu d'autres manuscrits nous sont parvenus. Le plus ancien, connu à ce jour, est l'Evangile no. 6 de la Collection Kevorkian, à New York, copié en 1200, dont les ornements, finement, exécutés, sont apparentés à ceux des œuvres ciliciennes contemporaines. Le décor de l'Evangile no. 1 de l'ancienne Collection Esmérian (maintenant au Matenadaran, no. 10359), daté de 1201, est d'un tout autre style; les ornements rappellent davantage les enluminures des manuscrits de la Grande Arménie. Ces deux Evangiles reflètent bien la situation politique et culturelle d'Erznka et les rapports étroits que les moines et les monastères entretenaient tant avec les centres religieux de la Cilicie qu'avec ceux de la Grande Arménie.⁶⁹

Indeed, such were the relations of Erzindjan with Cilicia that in the case of a Bible copied at Erzindjan in 1338 miniatures executed by Sargis Picak in Cilicia were imported and incorporated into it.⁷⁰ One cannot entirely discount the possibility that some of the illuminations of our present Gospels, those in the unnumbered first fascicle, for example, containing the Concordance Tables, etc., were similarly imported. But the title-pages of the gospels are also of traditional Cilician design, and they could be much less conveniently copied outside the monastery, so that the Cilician features of the manuscript are probably better attributed to the influence, rather than the direct intervention, of Cilician schools of art. What the title-pages comprise of undoubted local inspiration, however, namely the evangelists' symbols, bear no close relationship to either the splendid illuminations of the Erzindjan Gospels or those of Cilicia, and do not greatly redound to the credit of any Armenian school of art. Each title-page bears an ornate headpiece (*xoran*) above the title, which is written in small gold uncials, supporting peacocks in various attitudes, in colours and gold; the initial capital is a large geometrical composition in colours and gold. The evangelists' symbols are strikingly different in style and execution: they are in bold colours, but with no gold, and are undoubtedly naïve in conception. They are obvious afterthoughts, added to conform with another tradition. Whereas the lion and eagle of Mark and John are fairly harmoniously situated on the page with respect to the initial letter and the rest of the text, Matthew's angel is accommodated awkwardly in the right margin, and Luke's ox ascends the stem of the decorated initial *K^c* in a manner more suited to a fly. Kiwlē-sērean has suggested⁷¹ that the 'grotesque' (*an'corni*) symbols were added after the completion of the manuscript, which must be correct, although it is difficult to date them more accurately. There are many examples of the incorporation of the evangelists' symbols into the design of title-pages of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,⁷² but in these the symbols have been planned by the same artist. Another afterthought in the Awag Vank^c Gospels is the addition of a representation of a book, the appropriate gospel, to the



Fig. 10

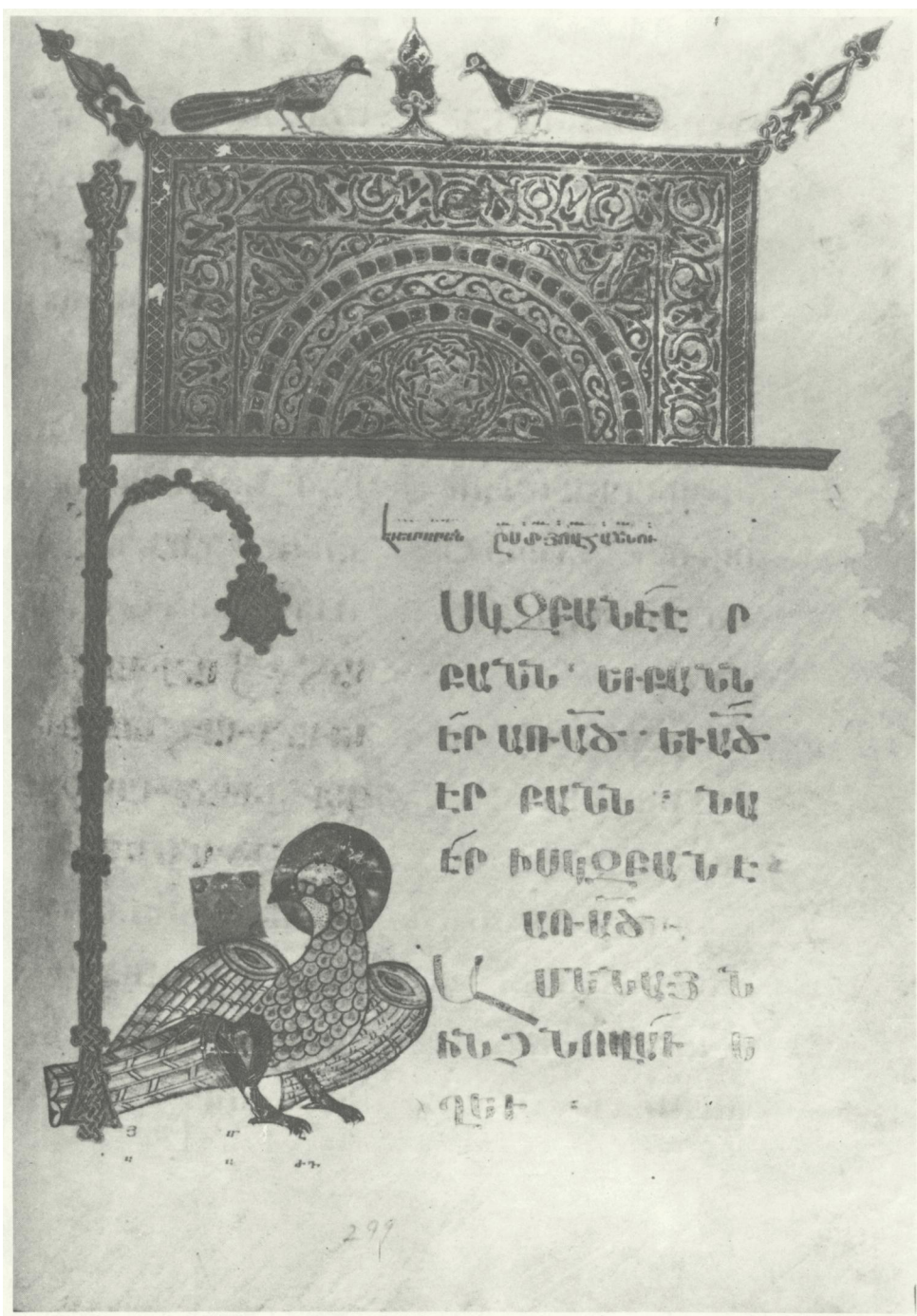


Fig. 11

evangelists' symbols themselves: Mark's lion, for example, clutches a blue book between his front legs, but the edge of his far leg shows through the book. Thus we have, in the interests of the maximum of conformity to the common-or-garden afterthoughts upon afterthoughts. But although the resulting combination of courtly and peasant art is somewhat incongruous, the general effect is not unpleasing. Mark's lion is engagingly quaint, and John's eagle even elegant.

No one article can exhaust the total interest of a work of art. One may hope, however, while leaving grains of sand to the poets, that historical and artistic excursions within the confines of a single manuscript may serve to show the world or worlds that may be reconstructed from a single object. Armenia, like other cultures, is best appreciated through things Armenian, and a single book, or poem, or vase, may give one insights far deeper than many pages of the historian's prose.

- 1 See Sotheby and Co., *Catalogue of Important Manuscripts and Miniatures, the Property of the Hagop Kevorkian Fund*, 7 Apr. 1975, lot 197 (£13,000), and *The Times* of 16 Dec. 1975, court page. Sotheby's catalogue contains a colour reproduction of the title-page of St. Mark's Gospel (fol. 117a) facing p. 97, and Concordance Table no. 6 (fol. 5b) in half-tone (both reduced). Concordance Table no. 10 (fol. 3b) is reproduced in half-tone by Garegin I Yosvsep'ean, *Yišatakarank' jeragrac' 1* (Memorial notices in MSS., fifth century to A.D. 1250) (Anthelias, 1951), cols. 639-40 (the title-page of a Gospel according to St. Matthew, reproduced there, cols. 641-2, as belonging to this manuscript, belongs in fact to another). The manuscript is described by Babgen Kiwlëserean, later coadjutor Catholicos of Cilicia, *C'uc'ak Jeragrac' Łalat'ioy Azgayin Matenadaran Hayoc'* (Catalogue of the MSS. in the Armenian National Library at Galata, Constantinople) (Anthelias, 1961), cols. 26-36. It is mentioned also in H. Buchtal and O. Kurz, *A Handlist of Illuminated Oriental Christian Manuscripts* (London, 1942), p. 95, no. 486, and E. F. Rhodes, *An Annotated List of Armenian New Testament Manuscripts* (Tokyo, 1959), p. 148, no. 1137 (as MS. no. 6 of the Kevorkian Collection). Some of its artistic features are noted by S. Der Nersessian, *Manuscrits arméniens illustrés des XII^e, XIII^e et XIV^e siècles* (Paris, 1936-7), pp. 19, 21 n. 3, and *The Chester Beatty Library: a catalogue of the Armenian manuscripts* (Dublin, 1958), p. 20.
- 2 *xłceal*, aor. pcl. of **xłcel* equivalent to *xłč'el* (N.B.H.L. lists *xılč* as equivalent to *xılč'* 'to make a case of conscience of').
- 3 In fact the year of the Armenian era.
- 4 This use of *Vard* ('Rose') as a female name beside *Vard* ('Increase'), a male name, may be added to that, dated 1588, listed by H. Ačařean, *Hayoc' anjnanunneri bařaran* (Armenian personal names), t. v (Erevan, 1962), p. 74.
- 5 This slip may be one reason for choosing this face of the cross as the reverse, and so concealed.
- 6 Reading *Arut'iw(nin)*, unless the *-in* of *Vard-ti(k)in*, at the top of the lower arm of the cross and level with the *Arut'iw* on the left arm serves a double purpose.
- 7 Reading *hgn* as *h(an)g(uč'eal)n* 'deceased', a severe ellipsis probably imposed by lack of space.
- 8 Western pronunciation *Tavus*, i.e. Tk. *tavus* 'peacock', a female name not listed in H. Ačařean, op. cit.
- 9 A form of *Zmrut'* (Tk. *zümriüt*) not listed by Ačařean, op. cit., t. II, pp. 210-11.
- 10 A nearly invisible, perhaps deliberately erased, memorial in *bolorgir*, probably seventeenth century, on the otherwise blank fol. 384a asks for Christ's mercy at his Second Coming upon Awetik', but almost certainly not the Ter Awetik' of the main colophon. The folios of the manuscript were restituted, as described above, after its arrival in Constantinople in the seventeenth century, and the final folio may have been incorporated then as a fly-leaf, and the memorial notice it bore deliberately erased.
- 11 See above, p. 143, and n. 21.
- 12 Confrontation of the scripts of the two manuscripts would decide the question. Otherwise the Erevan MS. is very different from the Awag Vank' Gospels, comprising 603 vellum folios, 705 mm by 550 mm, triple column, 45 lines per

- column, illuminated by Step'anos, and first bound by Step'anos in 1205; but its script is described as upright (*ullagic*) *erkat'agir* (L. Xač'ikean and A. Mnac'akanean, eds., *C'uc'ak jeragrac' Maštoc'i anvan Matenadarani*, t. II (Erevan, 1970), col. 597).
- 13 See above, p. 163 n. 1.
- 14 See *ibid.*
- 15 *hraman*, *lit.* 'command'. The possible meaning of 'sentence' proposed above, but not listed in any dictionary known to me, may be calqued on Greek *διάρτης* usually meaning 'command' in LXX (e.g. Ps. 118/119: 91, rendered *hraman* in the Armenian Vulgate), otherwise used in Rhetoric in the sense of 'arrangement of topics' (Liddell and Scott). Cf. English *sentence* in its sense of 'a short passage of Scripture in liturgical use' (*O.E.D.*).
- 16 See map facing p. 12 in G. Siwrmēnean, *Erznka* (Cairo, 1947).
- 17 Op. cit., no. 308, col. 684.
- 18 *mijnak* is listed with the variant *mijak* by *N.B.H.L.*, but not in a grammatical sense; it must here refer to the *mijakēt* 'middle-point', 'a punctuation mark which is in value midway between the comma (*storakēt*) and the full-stop (*verjakēt*)' (Malkhasiantz), i.e. the Armenian semicolon (.).
- 19 *stur*, probably for (ə)*stor* 'lower part, bottom', possibly to be read as the first element of *storakēt* (i.e. *stor- ew vern-a-kēt*) 'comma'; it may seem tautologous with *storat* 'comma', though with its context it seems meant to imply that the scribe has copied every punctuation mark, in the middle, below, and above the line.
- 20 *vernakēt*, *lit.* 'upper (*verin*) mark', probably not a mistake for *verjakēt* 'end-mark, full stop', if the above interpretation (n. 19) is correct.
- 21 See Ľ. Inčičean, *Storagruč'iwñ hin Hayastaneayc'* (Venice, 1822), pp. 3-4.
- 22 A note in *nōtragir* in the margin reads, 'This holy Gospel was written in the year 649; among us this is the year 525 [reading *šie*; Y. reads *jie*, i.e. 928]'. 525 = A.D. 1200 would indicate a solar era beginning A.D. 576; 928 = A.D. 1200 a solar era beginning A.D. 273. No such eras are known to me. 525 Hijrah = A.D. 1130; 928 Diocletian = A.D. 1211 approximately.
- 23 Y. *gcagruč'eamb*, K. om. The word could be otiose, but probably indicates that the scribal side of the manuscript was finished, leaving the art-work to be done. See above, p. 160.
- 24 Reading, with Y., *i barexawsut'iwñ*; K. reads *i barexawsut'ean* 'in the intercession'.
- 25 Some letters are missing here, four according to Y., six according to K.
- 26 One can read *nora*, omitted by Y. and K.
- 27 Grigor VI, 1194-1203, surnamed Apirat ('the Wicked'), having accepted the tenets of the Council of Chalcedon at the Council of Tarsus in 1196; in the year preceding the completion of our manuscript he had consecrated Leo I/II king of Armenia.
- 28 Reading . . . *rut'ean* as (tka)*rut'ean*.
- 29 H. W. Duda, trans., *Die Selttschukengeschichte des Ibn Bibi* (Munksgaard/Copenhagen, 1959), p. 35. On the Mangujakids, see Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, trans. J. Jones-Williams (London, 1968), pp. 108, 127, 327, etc. On the relationship between Kemakh and Erzindjan in the artistic domain, see above, pp. 156, 160.
- 30 i.e. $(2 \times 500) + 50 + 4 = 1054$ of the Armenian era, beginning 21 Oct. 1604; the date referred to is thus 22 Aug. A.D. 1605 Old Style, 1 Sept. A.D. 1605 New Style.
- 31 The body of St. Nerses, who was poisoned by King Pap, was buried in the village of Thil in the canton of Ekeleac' or Eznka, in the Kat'ulikē church he had himself built; the church was destroyed during the Arab invasions c. 635; his upright sarcophagus, with the body of the saint seated on a throne, was reputedly discovered in 1275, and his and other relics transported to Erzindjan 'sealed in two chests, out of fear of the Turks' (Ľ. Inčičean, op. cit. (Venice, 1822), pp. 19-20).
- 32 *Hayk' i himanc' tapalin*. Cf. P'awstos Buzand, *Hist.* IV. 13, where St. Nerses tells Arshak II, 'I have seen a vision, that perdition and destruction come rooting and leaping upon this ruined country of Armenia' (*ayl es tesi tesil, zi korust ew k'andumn yuzeal xalac'eal gay i veray korstakan Hayoc' aysorik*).
- 33 The abbreviation *Kost* is not listed as a form of Kostandia by Ač'arean (*Hayoc' anynanunneri bač'aran*, pt. 2 (Erevan, 1944), p. 648) and only one occurrence of this name is listed, as that of Leo V's Latin queen, daughter of Frederic I of Sicily. *Kosti* is listed as a Russian (?) form of *Kostandin*, beside *Kostik* (listed also p. 676) occurring in the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- 34 *et*, *lit.* 'he gave', probably for *etu* 'I gave' or *etak'* 'we gave'.

- 35 *or.*
- 36 A pun may be intended on Tartary.
- 37 *awartn onc' ti lini.* Kiwlēsērean, col. 34, reads the first word, wrongly, as *awurk'n* 'days', i.e. 'how the days (*pl.*) will be (*sg.*)'. The parallel passage adduced above, p. 154, as probably by the same writer, Grigor Daranalc'i, is more literary in style (*awartn zinc' lineloc' ē. onc' ti lini*, a Western Armenian equivalent of which would be written *inc' pēs piti allay*, is Eastern Armenian. Though the dialect of Kemakh in the nineteenth century at least was Western (*gə*-branch, see H. Adjarian, *Classification des dialectes arméniens* (Paris, 1909), p. 55), there is evidence that Grigor Daranalc'i came originally from the Eastern regions of Armenia: 'In the year 1052 [A.D. 1602/3] when I, Grigor, seeker of the Word, came from the Araratian land to this land of Xaxtik' [Xaltik'] which is now called Babert' [Bayburt], to the feet of this blessed father of ours, the thrice-great, universe-illuminating vardapet, the excellent rhetor Srapion, who is now in the monastery of Vahanašēn and prior of this holy community in this unkind time . . .', St. James, Jerusalem, MS. no. 819, cit. Yovsep'ean, *op. cit.*, col. 212.
- 38 Michael J. Arlen, *Passage to Ararat* (London, 1976), pp. 123, 121.
- 39 Anonymous chronicle, reproduced by V. A. Hakobyan, *Manr žamanakagrut'yunner xiii-xviii dd.* [Minor chronicles of the 13th-18th centuries], pt. I (Erevan, 1951), p. 182, l. 18 ('in the days of winter'); *Chronicle of Martiros Di Arak'el*, reproduced *ibid.*, pt. II (Erevan, 1956), p. 428, l. 25 ('at the beginning of the year, year 1054' [inc. 21/31 Oct. 1604]; Hakobyan's suggestion that this refers to 'August 11th, in the event of the fixed calendar [of John the Deacon]', p. 436 n. 16, is misleading, since there is no reason to suppose that the chronicler is not using the usual mobile Armenian calendar).
- 40 Hakobyan, *op. cit.*, pt. II, p. 428, l. 27 (*ays ē mec surgunn*).
- 41 'In the year 1058 [inc. 20/30 Oct. 1608] Murat Pasha effected the surkun [pron. *surgun*]', Hakobyan, *op. cit.*, pt. II, p. 270, l. 3.
- 42 Sotheby's *Catalogue* quoted above, lot no. 199; this manuscript contains the earliest reference to the work of Mesrop of Khizan (1053 Arm., inc. 12.10.1603), otherwise thought to date from 1605 (see S. Der Nersessian, *The Chester Beatty Library*, p. 20).
- 43 V. A. Hakobyan, *op. cit.*, pt. I, p. 160.
- 44 Erevan (Matenadaran) MS. no. 1354 (Grigor Tathevatz'i's *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*), fols. 199b-200a; the relevant extract from the colophon is reproduced by V. A. Hakobyan, *op. cit.*, pt. II, p. 277, n. 47.
- 45 *Ibid.*, pp. 517-18.
- 46 *jin u jorin kivan, ēšə otatak gnac'*, cit. A. S. Ānalanyan, *Aracani* (Erevan, 1960), p. 230.
- 47 Yovsep'ean, *op. cit.*, cols. 211-12, preceding the passage quoted in n. 37 above. The account points to a military action on the part of the sipāhis from the beylerbeylik of Erzerum, and/or possibly Kars and Trabzon. The ranks of the leaders are given in Armenian guise, *berdapah*, *gawaṛapah*, *ostikan*, and *despan* respectively; the first corresponds to the Ottoman *dizdar* 'castellan', the second to the *sancak beyi* or the *beylerbeyi* himself; *ostikan* 'prefect, constable' may refer to the *subaşı*; the *despan* may be the official sent *ad hoc* from the Sublime Porte, an *elçi*, if it does not refer to the *qādi*, directly responsible to the Sultan, though an unlikely participant in a military campaign. On the administration of Anatolia at this time, see Halil İnalcik, *The Ottoman Empire, the Classical Age, 1300-1600*, trans. N. Itzkowitz and C. Imber (London, 1973), pp. 104-18.
- 48 *Chronicle Edited by Grigor of Kamakh* [otherwise Daranalc'i], continuation contained in Erevan (Matenadaran) MSS. nos. 1151, 7273, Hakobyan, *op. cit.*, pt. II, p. 271. See notes 37 above and 58 below.
- 49 Yovsep'ean, *op. cit.*, col. 212 (the continuation of the passage quoted in n. 37 above).
- 50 H. İnalcik, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-1.
- 51 See above, no. 41.
- 52 *History of the Turks* (London, 1687), pp. 30-1.
- 53 Bishop Norayr Polarean (Bogharian), *Mayr C'uc'ak jetagrac' Srboc' Yakobeanc' (Grand catalogue of St. James manuscripts)*, IV (Jerusalem, 1969), 96-7.
- 54 Mesrop Nšanēan (ed.), *Žamanakagrut' iwn Grigor Vardapeti Kamaxec'woy kam Daranalc'woy* [Chronicle of the vardapet Grigor of Kamakh or Daranalik'] (Jerusalem, 1915).
- 55 *Druagner žē. daru t'rk' ahayoc' patmut'enēn, 1609i ew 1635i brni nergali' nerə* [Chapters in the history of Turkish Armenians in the seventeenth century, the forced immigrations of 1609 and 1635], *Ėndarjak Taregirk' S.P. A. Hiwandanoc'i* (1949), pp. 273-326.

- 56 *asdin andin kit'nelov*, lit. 'leaning/lying (low) here and there', Berberian, loc. cit., p. 285 (13).
- 57 Ibid., p. 291 (19).
- 58 Hakobyan, op. cit., p. II, p. 271, ll. 40-1; see above, n. 37.
- 59 Yovsep'ean, op. cit., col. 212, ll. 30-2.
- 60 Hakobyan, loc. cit., ll. 37-8.
- 61 Fol. 2a, memorial notice, l. 2; Yovsep'ean, loc. cit., l. 3.
- 62 e.g. those called *Amenap'rkic'* (Saviour of All) and *Meṛelayaroyc'* (Resurrector of the Dead); see S. Der Nersessian, *The Chester Beatty Library*, p. xxi.
- 63 Formerly MS. no. 1 of the P. Esmerian-R. Markosian Collection, Paris (Rhodes, op. cit., no. 157), now MS. no. 10359 of the Erevan, Matenadaran, Collection (L. Xač'ikyan and A. Mnač'-akanyan, eds., *C'uc'ak jeṛagrac' Maštoc'i anvan Matenadaran*, pt. II (Erevan, 1970), col. 1101).
- 64 See below, n. 69.
- 65 See above, p. 147.
- 66 St. James, Jerusalem, MS. no. 1925, described by N. Polarean, op. cit. vi (Jerusalem, 1972), 401-16.
- 67 S. Der Nersessian, *Etudes byzantines et arméniennes*, t. 1 (Louvain, 1973), p. 603, trans. from *Ējmiacin* (1966), fasc. 11-12, p. 28.
- 68 But not, of course, until 1242, well after the copying of the Awag Vank' Gospels.
- 69 Loc. cit., pp. 603-4.
- 70 Erevan, Matenadaran, MS. no. 359/2627; Rhodes, op. cit., no. 858.
- 71 Op. cit., col. 27.
- 72 e.g. Chester Beatty MS. no. 556 of the twelfth century, and no. 557 of the thirteenth century, the latter probably executed in the province of Ayrarat (see S. Der Nersessian, *The Chester Beatty Library: a catalogue . . .* (1958), cit. *supra* n. 1, pp. 17, 22, plates 3b, 4b, 5, 6).